

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

In response to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Claim 2 has been amended to delete the phrase "describing the final geometry". The claim now claims the internal surface of the opening being produced by the separation process.

Claim 44 has been amended to call for the metal base plate having a thickness chosen such that the opening can be punched out in one stamping step. This is a structural limitation.

The metal base plate in Flickinger is not described as a stamped base plate and therefore there is no disclosure in Flickinger that the thickness of base plate 8 is such that the opening can be punched out in one stamping step.

The advantage of the claimed invention is that it can be formed with a low material content and by a low manufacturing cost in that the opening can be stamped and the undercuts which form the retention structure being formed at the same time. Granted that such a stamped and punched part is thinner than with a machined part, but the disadvantage of the short length of the opening from the front to rear side is overcome by providing the retention structure between the front and rear sides in the stamping operation. All of this is made possible by choosing the thickness of the metal base plate sufficiently thin that the opening can be punched out in a single stamping step.

Since Flickinger fails to disclose this limitation, Claims 44, 45, 2-10, 23 and 30-33 are not anticipated thereby. For the same reason, the remaining claims are not obvious over Flickinger combined with any of the secondary references.

Although it is believed that the application is now in condition for allowance, if the Examiner believes that further issues remain, it is requested that he telephone the undersigned at 260-460-1692.

Application Serial No. 10/791,165  
Amendment dated May 3, 2007  
Reply to Office Action dated December 4, 2006

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby petition therefor and authorize that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 02-0385, Baker & Daniels.

Respectfully submitted,

John F. Hoffman  
Registration No. 26,280

Attorney for Applicants

JFH/nw

BAKER & DANIELS LLP  
111 East Wayne Street, Suite 800  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802  
Telephone: 260-424-8000  
Facsimile: 260-460-1700

Enc. Petition for Extension  
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CERTIFICATION OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on: May 3, 2007

JOHN F. HOFFMAN, REG. NO. 26,280  
Name of Registered Representative

Signature

May 3, 2007  
Date